

INL Intelligence

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A high-level monthly briefing on operations and activities at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory
Work at the lab advances the Department's strategic goals in the areas of energy, environment, defense and science.

■ Agreements Enable Expanded Cancer Therapy Research

NorthStar Nuclear Medicine, Inc. and Idaho National Laboratory have signed two agreements on a major new technology to produce an extremely valuable medical isotope, actinium-225, for use in cancer research and treatment. The pacts open the door to another source of a medical isotope that can be used in a cancer treatment regimen that offers many advantages over traditional treatment approaches. "This contribution to medical isotope production demonstrates the breadth of research by INL scientists, while underscoring our dedication to the peaceful uses of nuclear materials," said Jim Lake, INL Associate Laboratory Director for Nuclear Programs. NorthStar's President and CEO George Messina added, "This agreement and partnership is a major step in achieving our goal of enabling the future of nuclear medicine."

■ Laboratory Retains Star Safety Status

The Department of Energy earlier this month recertified Idaho National Laboratory as a DOE-Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Star site. "VPP Star status is recognition that INL has a program of safety excellence and continuous improvement," said Bowen Huntsman, INL's Voluntary Protection Program manager. "This recognition says the employees care enough about safety to pay attention to the details that make projects and programs safe and successful." The DOE began its Voluntary Protection Program in 1992 to promote improved safety and health performance at its many facilities around the country. Based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards, only those sites that are "best in class" achieve Star status.

■ Regional Scientists Use High-tech Tools to Target Cheatgrass

In collaboration with Pacific Northwest research institutions and with funding from NASA, INL researchers are developing a Web-based mapping model that uses climate and ecological data to help identify and plot cheatgrass. Cheatgrass is an exotic grass that quickly migrates, and is a major contributor to summer range wildfires in eastern Idaho. Once mapped, land managers can determine the best way to eradicate large tracts of the plant. This ability to track and map cheatgrass and other invasive species plays an important role in preventing the regeneration of undesirable plants. Future versions of this imaging technology will look for ways of tracking other invasive species across Idaho and the Pacific Northwest. More information is available at <http://gis.inel.gov/cheatgrass>.

■ INL Leader Takes Reins of International Nuclear Organization

Harold McFarlane, director of the Space Nuclear Systems and Technology Division at INL, has begun his year-long term as president of the American Nuclear Society (ANS). The ANS is a not-for-profit, international scientific and educational organization established to serve its members in their efforts to develop and safely apply nuclear science and technology for public benefit through knowledge exchange, professional development, and enhanced public understanding. McFarlane has been at the Idaho lab for more than 30 years.

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